THE COMIC READER

30¢

NO. 46
FEB.

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
ACADEMY OF COMIC BOOK FANS AND COLLECTORS

THE COMIC READER, the official newsletter of the Academy of Comic Book Fans And Collectors, is edited and published monthly by Derrill Rothermich. TCR is a non-profit amatuer fanzine published for the enjoyment of comic fans.

It seems that TCR #45 was quite successful. Virtually every comment was well in its favor. I wish I could have an equivalent issue every month but this is impossible to do. Still I intend to do my best to see that every issue is interesting. The only consistent complaint was about the absence of the letter column. I had never dreamed just how popular this is until just now. Almost everyone wanted to know why it wasn't present. Well there was a very good reason for this. If I had included it, TCR #45 would have cost an additional nickel per issue to mail and I just couldn't afford this. As a result something had to be left out and I choose the letter column as the most obvious item. I hope that the long one in this issue will satisfy you.

A couple of items that I had hoped to have in this issue have not arrived at the time this is being written so the issue will go to press without them unless I receive them in the mail tomorrow. These two is the second installment of the FOX and also Bill Dubay's PICTO-ORIGINS. As a result these two will be scheduled for next issue. As of now, TCR #47 looks like another long issue. It will definitely include the results of the Alley Poll, another article by Dave Kaler, and Question Corner by Ray Miller. Tentatively scheduled is the next two segments of FOX plus the PICTO-ORIGIN by Bill. I would imagine that this makes most of you wonder what has happened to John Ryan's BIDGEE column. Well, it is not now scheduled for #47 although this may change on a moment's notice. Right now the plans call for the next BIDGEE column to appear in TCR #48 and it will be by far his longest effort, running about 5 pages in length. It is to be on the career of another of Australia's leading artists--John Dixon. This will also be the next issue to have a color cover but I will leave the artist a secret. I warn you not to miss #48 as this cover will really be a great one.

++

All material for TCR has to reach me by the first of the month to appear in that month's issue. However, it's a great aid to me if you get it to me as early as possible.

Cost of TCR is $ .25 to Academy supporting members and $ .30 to non-members. Air mail subscriptions for overseas fans are $ .50 for members and $ .60 for non-members. I will send TCR in manila envelopes if you send these and add a 5¢ stamp to each or for an additional dime per issue I will furnish the envelope and stamp for it. TCR is free to all pros upon request. Subscriptions are available for $1.50 which entitles Academy members to 6 issues and non-members to 5 issues. You will be given the Academy discounts this year even though there are no coupons if I get your 1965 coupon.

Only ads accepted in advance will run in TCR. Send an s.a.e. for a reply as to whether your ad is accepted. Please check with me regarding the size of any illustrated ads you may want to run. New ad rates are $2.00 per half page and $4.00 per full page. Enclosures are $3.00 if printed on one side and $5.00 if on two.

When ordering TCR please state the issue you want. If that issue is sold out, I will send the current issue. Print run for this issue is 500. Copies of TCR #42-45 are still available. You can also still get some odd pages from other issues from Glen for a 10¢ s.a.e.

If you would like a quick reply from me and you are not a regular correspondent, send a s.a.e. Otherwise your answer will be sent with the next issue of TCR. In fact, when you request information from any extremely busy fan, this is advisable. Not only is it a service to the fan but it will help you get an answer more rapidly.

ADDRESSES:

Doug Potter, 1506 Zuber Drive, Galena Park, Texas 77547
Alan Hutchinson, 4051 60th Way North, St. Petersburg, Florida 33709
David Kaler, Box 392, Cooper Station, New York, New York
Derrill Rothermich, Box 801, Rolla, Missouri 65401
Jim King (same as above)

COPYRIGHTS:

Hawkman, Atom, Doll Man--National
Magnus--Gold Key
Spiderman--Marvel
Highwayman--REFCO

CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS ISSUE:

Cover--Alan Hutchinson
On The Drawing Board--David Kaler
On The Drawing Board logo--Alan Hutchinson

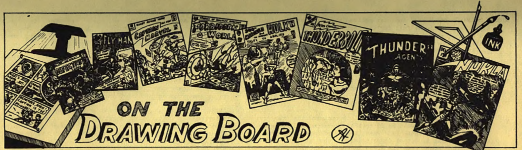
Cat Woman--Doug Potter
Comic Mirror logo--Bill Dubay
Doll Man--Margaret Gemignani
Atom--Paul Moslander
Small Talk--Glen Johnson
Highwayman--Ronn Foss
Spiderman--Ronn Foss

COPYRIGHTS:

Hawkman, Cat Woman, Doll Man, Atom--National
Mr. L. Dedd, Dr. M. T. Graves--Charlton
Spiderman--Marvel
Highwayman--REFCO
Magnus--Gold Key

STAFF:

Editor and Publisher--Derrill Rothermich
Subscription Editor--Jim King
News Editor--David Kaler
Artists--Doug Potter, Gary Povlin, Bill Dubay, Biljo White, Ronn Foss, Alan Hutchinson
Writers--John Ryan, Ray Miller, Glen Johnson, Jim King, Dave Kaler



ANOTHER GREEN HERO! Dell is bringing back Frankenstein, only this time he will be part of a super hero crew that will eventually have Dracula and the Werewolf as members. Frankenstein will appear in April and the other titles will follow.

ALL EAGER ARTISTS OUT THERE. Syd Hoff has just written a volume on the creation and selling of cartoons and strips to the syndicates and magazines. In LEARNING TO CARTOON, you will find all you need to know about the methods of artists and how they get the ideas for their strips. Note especially page 155 where you get to see Alfred Andriola's work from the beginning rough sketch to a final finished strip. There also are samples of work by Celardo, Boring, Crane, and others from which to learn. The book is from Stravon Educational Press and is only $4.95.

TEAMUPS IN BRAVE AND BOLD. The Flash-Doom Patrol starrer came from the typewriter of Bob Haney. The cover was done by DP's regular artist, Bruno Premiani, while all the inside artwork was by Sal Trapani. The next crew to grace the pages of Brave And Bold will be Metamorpho and the Metal Men.

BATTLING BEINGS OF MARVEL. You'll find Sgt. Fury blowing up half of Italy with a young Italian girl helping. And soon there will be a traitor in the ranks of the Howling Commandos. Iron Man defeats Ultimo only to come back to battle the U.S.A. itself. And Captain America finally meets Nick Fury. The Behemoth won't keep Submariner busy very long because there are other dangers to overcome waiting for him.

NEA ARTICLE. The Newspaper Enterprise Association has prepared an article about the Marvel group. Dave Burgin of the New York office has prepared an item called "You'd Never Know New Comic Books" which is being offerred to newspapers all over the nation.

BOLTINOFF'S BEST! The Doom Patrol welcomes Superman, Batman, Flash and Wonder Woman to their pages to witness the marriage of Elasti-Girl to Mento. Don't forget the old shoes and rice! The Challengers are too busy to attend as Villo is keeping them busy with his boasting. But he has something to back it up with when he uses one of the Challengers to destroy the others in The Final Hour for the Challangers.

THE SAGAS OF SCHWARTZ. How does a man fight a mask? It's all part of the puzzle that faces the Atom when he selects sizes to battle The Man In The Iron Mask. And if one Green Lantern can't solve a problem, you can always call up another. The GL's of Earths 1 and 2 meet again to battle Prince Peril's Power Play. Horrendous Horrors challange the Flash when he enters the Corridor of Chills. CAW creeps again and the Winged Wonders find themselves trying to gain possession of the Treasure of the Talking Head. And you will find most of them teamed-up in the pages of the Justice League where they face the Shaggy Man and come a hair's breathe away from defeat.

OLDSTER'S OASIS. That is exactly what the pages of P.S. will seem like to you! This new magazine promises pages and pages of nostaligia for all of those old enough to remember radio when it was live and Krazy Kat when he romped through the funnies section of your local paper. It is only 60¢ on the stands and they promis an article on Batman for the next issue.

THE AGENTS OF CHARLTON. The Fightin' 5 come up against the plans of SATAN and battle their way through subway tunnels and underwater installations to beat the many members of SATAN. And Sarge Steel isn't really gone! He's just being revamped and will appear in June as SECRET AGENT. Watch for that title!

COLLECTOR'S ITEM CLASSICS. The third issue will feature the book that gave the Submariner back to Fandom, FF #4. Iron Man will be seen in his original gold uniform. There will be a Watcher tale, a Dr. Strange saga and the Hulk adventure from the third issue of his own book when he was banished into Outer Space.

MENACES FOR THE MASKED MANHUNTER! Shades of the Thorn! Batman finds himself facing an itchy problem when he meets a new female villain, Poison Ivy. Not only can she steal a million, she also looks like one. And in Batman for that month, he gains a power that turns the underworld inside out. It is all part of Batman's Crime Hunt A-Go-Go!

SEIGAL AND SHUSTER AND SUPERMAN. The full rights return into the hands of the creators sometime in the late Spring. National is waiting to see what the pair will ask of them and how they will want their brain child treated in the future.

THE HUMOUROUS HEROES OF DC. If one Super-Hip isn't enough to make you enjoy yourself, consider what happens when Bob Hope becomes Super Hope and Benedict Arnold High has to put up with them both. Over in the local grade school, Stanley and his Monster stalk the halls to keep an elderly teacher from having to retire. And for the pre-school set, Sugar and Spike are whisked away to Lobster Island where they meet fishy babies of the deep and wind up fighting Sidney, the Sea-Hawk.

KOMPETITION FROM KING COMICS. King Features Syndicate have recalled back six cartoon strips that they had licensed to other companies. They've done it so that they can enter the comic book market again. If you check soon, you'll find such titles as Mandrake, Flash Gordon, and the Phantom from this company. The three other titles are Popeye, Blondie and Beetle Bailey. Once the first books are on the stands, other titles will be considered as well as some original properties.

MARVEL MAYHEM. Stan's stories get wilder and wilder. Spidey faces robots galore in a book entitled Once Upon a Time There Was A Robot! The X-Men find themselves in the West where Lucifer uses robots to battle them and the provessor. And somewhere in Earth a few thousand miles away the Hulk finds his hands full of Tyrannus and the minions of the Mole Man.

NUKLA'S NEMESIS. Dell's entry in the super hero field finds himself on the moon destroying an arsenal set up by a power mad villain. Look at the art and see if you can tell whether the pencils were done by Steve Ditko. They were and Sol Trapani inked them.

CHARLTON'S CHAMPIONS. Judo Master takes over the Gunmaster title for issue #89 when he will be trapped by Japanese and taken a prisoner of war. And in the third issue of Thunderbolt, he finds himself in the Ape Arena. A scientist finds himself leading an army of apes when Thunderbolt decides to take a hand in the action. Captain Atom has to meet Dr. Spectro again. But that doesn't mean that the earth is peaceful! He winds up on a spaceship battling a villain in order to halt the Death Knell of the World.

SHAZAM BECOMES SPLIT AND XAM! The newstands came up with an old familiar name this month but it was for a brand new hero. Captain Marvel, in the form of a robot that splits apart, made his debut in a quarter book from a company that issued a comic entitled HENRY BREWSTER a few months ago. For all those wondering how the name could be used, Mr. Carl Burgos told me that he was able to use the name because it had become public domain again.

MIGHTY SPINS UP THE WEB! And they revived a character that had kept their mailboxes full for the past few weeks. The mail was so in favor of this character that he may replace the SHIELD for one issue, the July FLY MAN. In the meantime, you can find the Shield battling the Gloater while the Fly Man becomes the pawn of the Ultra-Foes, Hangman and the Wizard in the May issue.

BATMAN IN THE NEWSPAPERS AGAIN. But don't get your hopes up too high! For the week beginning January 31st, the Batman was mentioned on Monday and Tuesday and this all lead up to his appearance during the next three days.

MARVEL NEVER LETS THEM DIE! Giant Man is back and the Avengers have him once more. Only he is entirely revamped and now goes by the name of Goliath. This makes the third name in the Marvel lineup that is out of the stories of the ancient religions. Thor comes from the Norse legends, Hercules from the Romans and Goliath out of the pages of the Bible.

THE SUPER WESTERN. A cowboy who can take on a whole town, a horse that makes the hair on grizzlie bears turn white and a book that is sure to be a winner. It can all be found on the pages of "A Gent From Bear Creek" by Robert E. Howard. This is a long out of print book by the same man who created Conan of Cimmerian. And the book is hard-bound and costs $4.00.

GHOSTS GALORE! Charlton welcomes you to the haunted pages of Ghostly Tales where they've hired Mr. L. Dedd(above) to guide you through tales of the weird and supernatural. And you'll also meet Dr. M. T. Graves (below) who spends his part of the book fighting ghosts that won't stay dead. Look for it soon!

MORE FROM KING FEATURES. A new live-action series based on Mandrake the Magician is being started in England soon. Phantom is under option to CBS and may be done in cartoon format.

THE YOUTHFUL CREW FROM DC. Supergirl meets a space villain who believes he is going to marry her. Earth X welcomes Jimmy Olsen to its soil where he becomes the Batman-Superman of that world. The Legion faces an atomic energy power of a 3-eyed fanatic as the second part of Space Stalag story unfolds. And Bobby Reed dials himself into the forms of HYPNO-MAN, the Human Starfish and the Mighty Moppet when the Clay Creep Clan threatens.

THE HEROIC EPICS FROM MARVEL. The Fantastic Four are caught off guard when that bald headed man takes the place of the Thing and gets into the Baxter Building to destroy Reed and Sue. But the tables get turned on him with some surprising results. There are only three pages on Johnny at College but they are strong enough to make you want to see more of it. And on top to that, they have a character coming that has all of Marvel astir. He'll appear in Fantastic Four soon as the Black Panther. Fandom will probably love him! Over in THOR, Pluto, the God of the Underworld, gets Hercules to sign a contract that makes him the ruler of the Underworld. The only way that he can break the deal is to have another person battle Pluto and beat him. That's where Thor comes in!

DELL'S DENIZENS. Toka finds himself facing a new threat in the jungle when it is invaded by 20th Century Conquistadors. Kona meets the Mole and the city reverts to a primitive jungle in which the man from a lost world has a tough battle to win. Lobo, the negro cowboy, will again be on sale in April. But Naza has been discontinued for now.

DC'S GIANTS. Superman again and this time the book is devoted to his Fortress of Solitude. You get to see the fortresses that he once built in space, at the center of the earth, and under the sea. You'll also get to see how the Fortress looked as it was first seen in 1942. (Over in ACTION, the Superman of the Future appears again in a tale by Edward Hamilton.)

NEWS FROM THE TV WORLD. Batman has sure made an impact on the ratings and the home screens. In it's third week, the show was rated #1 for the second segment and #5 for the first part. Let's hope that with the more subdued comedy touches that were part of the third program, they will be able to stay in the top thirty shows. Marvel isn't taking all of this laying down. On top of the proposed cartoon series featuring Spider-man and Captain America, they are now talking about a live-action series possibly based on the same characters. If it is sold, Stan Lee will have to write the first six shows for the producer. There is still plenty of talk in TV circles about the Batman success and all of it is pointed at getting similar type heroes to be portrayed on the TV screens. Wonder Woman, the Green Hornet and a number of others are already optioned for TV. L'il Abner is already in production and CBS now has the rights to The Shadow for a possible time slot in 1967. Metamorpho has even been hinted at for a series before long. A funny note to add is that a family in Toronto decided to live without TV for one week. It turned out that week was the premiere one for the Batman show. No matter how hard the father coaxed and pleaded, the children refused to let him turn on the set for the show. I guess it's a case of making the rules and having to live by them.

COMIC FANDOM IN TOYLAND. Loads of toys are being planned for the market that will be based on Comic Heroes. There probably will be a BATMAN villains kit with masks the kids will wear to look like the Joker and other foes of Batty. It also looks like you'll be able to print up your own copies of The Daily Planet when the Clark Kent Newspaper Kit reaches the stores. Aurora of course is releasing the Wonder Woman kit now and they are working on four figures from the Marvel line. They had tentatively chosen Spidey, Iron Man, Hulk, and Captain America. I don't know when they will be on sale but you can start looking around sometime in the Summer. Right now you can buy a number of items based on DC's big two. Ideal is selling hand puppets of Batman and Superman at $1.00. Hasbro has a flying Superman selling for $1.00also. Superman also appears in a colorform kit and you can create two pictures of Supey in the new Stardust series.

THE FUNNIES IN OTHER MEDIA. National's Batman and Superman are all over these days. Cue Magazine featured Superman on the cover of the January 15th issue. The Detroit Free Press ran an adult type book review on the Batman comic story, The Puzzle of the Perilous Prizes, in its Sunday magazine for January 29. The Toronto Telegram for Saturday, January 8 ran Batman in full color on its magazine and then had an article on him inside which also had an item on Jim Warren of Creepy. National's pair have been depicted in political cartoons across the nation as well as appearing on the Business pages of many papers.

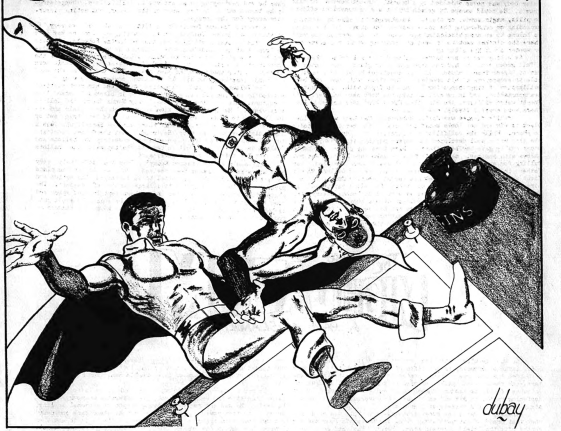
ENEMY ACE IS BACK! Enemy Ace will reappear in All-American Men of War alternating with Steve Savage and Johnny Cloud as soon as circumstances permit.

FANZINES, ANYBODY? John Buccafusco tells me that Adventure Heroes' Hide-A-Way #8 is now ready. Issue #9 will be a tribute to Batman. Send your quarter to John at 136 Prospect in Jersey City, New Jersey. CRUDZINE is now out and the price is only 25¢ for the first purposely lousy issue. Send all your funny money to Crudzine, 7014 Roberts Court, University City 30, Missouri. And Batmania #9 is now out and it's full of items about the brand new TV show.

The
FOX
Written & Illustrated by
©1966 by REFCO
AT A LOS ANGELES NEW YEARS EVE PARTY—
JUST WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, MISS...?
DON'T RUSH ME, STORM—YOU HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT!
AM I INTERRUPTING SOMETHING?
WHA?
BLANKS! WHAT GIVES HERE— WHO ARE YOU?
THANKS, LAURA!
MY MOTIVES ARE PURELY PERSONAL!
I-I MUST TALK TO YOU... IT'S VERY IMPORTANT! CAN-CAN WE BE ALONE?
WE'LL GO TO MY OFFICE— PICK YOU UP LATER, LAURA!
OH, SURE... IT'S ONLY NEW YEARS EVE!
I HOPE YOU HAVE SOME EXPLANATION FOR YOUR ACTIONS!
MINUTES LATER—
THIS IS WHERE YOU CONDUCT BUSINESS?
I TRY TO BE COMFORTABLE!

YOU'RE A WORLD TRAVELER, MR. STORM? AND A BOOK LOVER??
VICARIOUSLY, I HATE TO ADMIT! I CAN'T SEEM TO FIND TIME TO DO THE THINGS I'D LIKE!! LOOK, MISS... MISS—
VELVET WILL DO— THAT'S WHAT I'M KNOWN AS! NOW THEN, SUPPOSE YOUR COMPANION HADN'T SHOWN UP WHEN SHE DID... WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?
DISARMED YOU, I SUPPOSE! WHAT IF NOTHING HAD STOPPED YOU?
I DON'T KNOW— I WAS TOLD YOU'D DO SOMETHING TO PREVENT MY SHOOTING!
BY WHOM?
IN THE NEXT EXCITING EPISODE: 'KING' CHESSMAN...
MR. CHESSMAN, THE PRODUCER! HE'S MY BOSS!
WHY DID HE WANT YOU TO?
TO SEE HOW YOU'D REACT! I UNDERSTAND HE WANTS TO DO A FILM ON YOU, AND HE WONDERED IF WHAT HE'D HEARD ABOUT YOU IS TRUE— IT IS!!
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
Happy New Year!
MEANWHILE, AT THE CHESSMAN MOTION PICTURE STUDIOS—
BY NOW, THE FOX IS EITHER OUT OF THE WAY, OR FALLING INTO MY TRAP!
CHECKMATE!!
4
To be continued

COMIC MIRROR



DOLLMAN

by MARGARET GEMIGNANI

Smallness is not weakness. Tiny and strength mean the same thing. You wouldn't find these definitions in any dictionary but you will find them in one place--the Dollman stories.

This tiny man was quite popular in 1940 in his own comic and later in Feature. He had two revivals of his own comic--one in the fifties and one under IW reprints in present times.

To compare Darrell Dane, the Dollman, to the tiny hero of present time is to look at a style once popular but rarely seen today. The style of Dollman reminds the reader of the style of Eisner's Spirit. This full-sized realistic hero had a powerful, rough style, and was very realistic and mature for the comics. The first artists to work on the Dollman were Reed Crandal, the Black-

hawk artist, and later Curt Swan, the second artist to work on Superman.

Crandall could draw women--real flesh and blood women, the kind that cheered the hearts of all men. The male heroes were the dark, rough, muscular type that believed in fighting as a hero and as a man. They didn't believe in a man who looks the shy, stupid, and blundering fellow who had much time to be a hero because he lacked the social life. The Dollman was neither shy with his fiancee, embarassed with women, or lacking social life.

This tiny man wore no mask as the hero and only a simple costume of a gym suit in blue with cape and boots. His tiny but muscular body was never shielded by a helmet, insect powers, or fast growth. He could escape by growth but it was a conscious effort, no pills, magic words, or dials. He changed his size by mentally expanding or condensing the space between the atoms in his body. He belong to an unsophisticated age when no one worried too much where the clothes went to or whether somebody would recognize him or wonder about his alter ego.

As a tiny man he was better equipped to fight crime then as a full grown man. He had the strength of a giant even though he was no bigger than a mouse. In fact sometimes he hid in a mouse's hole to escape one of his enemies. The strip contained off beat utilization of tiny things for Dollman to fight with, as means of transportation, and in general to make the hero seem smaller. He fought weird villains, the kind that James Bond uses today. Also there were several lovely, deadly ladies.

Darrell's fiancee was Martha Roberts. Her hair was as blue-black as his and her looks would put many of the heroines of today to shame. While she fullfilled the function of lady in distress, she also had a well developed and serene personality. While she occasionally gave her hero fiance a hard time by pretending to be inlove with another, she did it only to make sure Darrell was not falling for some glamorous lady in distress. She assisted her father in his scientific work--some of which aided Dollman in his fight against crime. She knew his secret identity during his entire career. She became worried about Darrell's safety and in Feature #30 used the same process as Darrell to become a tiny girl using the name Midge. At first Dollman didn't know where this new partner came from but later he discovers her secret. After this she becomes Doll Girl and adopts a feminine version of Dollman's blue uniform. This was primarily used in the late fifties during their first revival. During this period he lost his status as a hero in good standing by hitting a woman. That is something a hero is never supposed to do.

One of the off beat villains to battle Dollman was the Flame who terrorized a circus in an attempt to gain control over it. He was aided by a beautiful villianess named Daya. Darrell happened to be there and see him in action. Dollman quickly appears and the chase begins. The Dollman stories had a pattern,typical of much of the hero literature of that day. When the criminal met his death it was usually in an attempt to destroy the hero with the trap backfiring. The Flame died in this way. He fell from a trapeze he was destroying in an attempt to kill Dollman. Surprisingly he turned out to be the owner of the circus, collecting insurance money for the damages.

A second foe was Tom Thumb, a little man who had two very big ambitions--to defeat Dollman and to grow bigger. Once he was able to do this by taking vitamins and courted Martha Roberts. However he found that he couldn't commit a crime as well in his new size and lost the girl and money to Dollman. Later he returned with the Undertaker, a criminal who lived in a cemetery, to commit more crimes. Later there was the Minstrel, a half mad genius who used his banjo together with his old fashioned costume as a weapon.

The Vulture, a mean executive, collected his rich victims' estated by killing all heirs. He dressed in black and looked like a vulture. When he threatened the lovely Sanda Trenn, the Dollman intervened. Martha comes in time to distract the villain and allow Dollman to recover and save all from an acid bath trap set up by the villainous executor. Then there was the Barrell who was a huge, dishonest machine boss. He tried to put the honest candidate and Dollman out of action. An attempt to destroy the ballots and Dollman in the sea when Dollman came to the top with the ballots and cast his vote for honest government.

What would be his chances today? They are definitely very good since he has already been revived. But IW is not the place for a hero of this one's potential to be displayed. The action and bizarre villains would appeal to a large number of readers. The plates for the original stories have been kept in good shape and come through well in printing. There must be a capable small publisher that can produce an old time style to which the readers of today can become accustomed.

The Mighty Atom

by PAUL MOSLANDER

The Atom debuted into the modern world in the Sept.-Oct., 1961, issue of Showcase as the fifth of National Comics' revivals of Golden Age features. Though preceeded by the Flash, Green Lantern, and the JLA--all prime features of yore--as well as Hawkman--a cause celebre to Fandom though never quite a blinding flash or deafening report in his old existence--the character was immediately notable for a variety of reasons:

Firstly, he was a new super/costumed-hero. This was at a time when that breed of cat was fairly rare. The Fantastic Four was six months off; the Shield, Captain Atom, Mercury Man, and John Force had all bowed out of sight after fitful existences. The Atom had all the power of the new wave of revived super-heroics behind him, plus the traditions of National superiority in the field--having dominated that particular baliwick for the bulk of the fifties.

He was unique. A six-inch hero with variable height just hadn't happened in the New Golden Age, and this was a long time after Dollman. He also had the personal idiosyncrasies of brownish-red hair (National's line was one of black and blonde, with few daring to be different with red or brown), and the more noticeable romantic problem of a girl who loved him, yet refused to marry him. A neat reversal on the customary heroic problem of beating the girls off with a stick, something institutionalized by Superman over many years of lacking much else to do.

His Kane and Anderson art was superb, matched by imaginitive storyfing from Gardner Fox, not yet feeling the pinch of carrying the bulk of the revivals and warmed-over All-Stars on his shoulders.

And, undoubtedly most important and certainly most outstanding, he had action.

The Flash pulled his speed stunts, Green Lantern played with his ring, Batman analysed clay, and the Superman family capered. In all herodom, though, only two costumed characters were bothering to pull off the gloves and fight. Hawkman was a good contender but tended away from fist action; that left the Atom to carry the traditions of a Golden Age of bare-knuckle men. And carry them he did.

He had no mace, no crossbow, no spaceship; no lasso, no power other than size and weight control, no offensive weaponry--except himself. He was and remains a living weapon of personal agility, speed, and fist power. His style is not to stand back and pound a crook down with currents of air, or deduce him to death and then lovepat him out in one anemic panel. He has to jump, hop, twist, swing, float, writhe, flip, and skitter through superbly visually active gymnastics to get to his victim, and then to deliver his haymakers as he can.

In a time before Marvel's spry atheletes and after the heyday of the Shield and Fly, this was something for a fan starved of healthy vicarious violence in super-hero comics. A rapid story plot with snappy pacing and intricate twists is a wonderful thing. So is imaginative and lively dialogue. Visually satisfying to the soul, though, is a hero who keeps up with the pace, who does more than chatter. One who contributes with might and main to the action, who fights a villain, not just out thinks him or stands off on the sidelines with a portable arsenal. This can and has been overdone. It can be over-emphasized, plopped in with anemic storying, mutilated with bad art, played as tritely as a tired-blooded ballet. But when it is good, it is magnificent. And in the Atom it was a beauty to behold.

A further idiosyncrasy to become apparent with succeeding issues was the calibre and type of the Meteoric Mite's adversaries. It is interesting to note that while the Flash has generated a personality cult of costumed villains, Marvel's heroes are constantly menaced by evil-doers of considerable and varied personal POWER with a bent to the exotic, and the Shadow has been fighting

Shiwan Khan for eons on end, the Atom has none of this. In twenty three issues and several more stories, he has only taken on Chronos, Carl Ballard, and Jason Woodrue twice.

Further, Chronos, Dr. Light, his own phantom duplecate, possibly his uniform, and perhaps Kulan Dar, the Druid, and a few aliens from spacial or dimensional worlds could really be called costumed villains. (The latter set, actually, are in their civilian outfits-they merely have differing tastes in wardrobe in their climes.)

Nor are the Atom's foes the super-powerful type of the Sandman or Electro school. They aren't even the walking arsenals reminiscent of the Penguin or Green Goblin. His particular meat are almost the Goldfinger types--the evil geniuses with a plan or gimick and no particular desire to gad about in gaudy silks and trappings, begging to be jumped on. Frequently they are plain, simple but clever crooks--something a lot of heroes had lost sight of back in 1961 for alien invasion and the more exotic costumed criminal. In street clothes, business suits, or other everday attire they ply their trades of villainy.

In a way this is fortunate for against a really powerful contender the Atom has few defenses save getting as small as possible as quickly as possible. Chronos and Dr. Light have demonstrated this, along with his Justice League enemies. In his own magazine, the hero needed a guest, Hawkman, to help him handle miniature aliens, and then Zatanna to aid him against the Druid. Still, he does not necessarily need mighty, earth-shaking adversaries to provide entertaining stories. A Black Phantom (but, then, I'm partial to David Niven) or Swan Maiden gives him enough trouble. It is something of a relief after the standard world saving tale.

It is a mite embarrassing to have to admit after all of this that, in fact, The Atom bores me no end. I have seen the same kayo scene where the mite drags a villain down by his tie so often that I'm trying to ignore it. With Marvel around, there is a joyous abundance of physical action considerably more intertaining than the National hero's frantic gallets. He has become an increasingly smaller frog in an increasingly larger pond.

Too, in spite of imaginative variations in plotting, Gardner Fox's stories are marked by an extraordinary brilliance for lackluster. The character is no longer new, his hair has changed color, and he has yet to develop any real personal characteristics or private life such as are enjoyed in Marvel, Metamorpho, Metal Men, or others. Each story is lacking of plot, with no development of personalities, personal entanglements, or other such side items as add spice and variety to a tale. I have an uneasy feeling that Ray and Jean will be smiling, but single, sweethearts, repeating the same banalities to each other when "Peyton Place" is being rerun on "Kaptain Kosmo's Kiddie Karnival".

As for other personalities, the Atom faces the same lot over and over again. Gardner Fox has developed one policeman, one or possibly one and a half crooks, one evil scientist, and one Incidental Girl or Incidental Man for plot stimulus (you should excuse the expression). These he uses in Flash, Hawkman, Atom, Brave And Bold, and the JLA. The only way to improve any of these magazines would be to ignore all the rest. That way your calorie count of stereotypes would go down, though not out.

Unfortunately, they are not only stereotypes, they are dull stereotypes. The simple ferocity of Attila the Hunter, an otherwise unnoteworthy fellow, would be welcome once in a while. Even a simple General Immortus or Brain--in disposition if not power or construction--could provide an oasis. Yet...no.

Also, Ivytown has a limited number of exotic sights. Houses, banks, and laboratories get a bit dull when you see them enough times. The Druid's world was a welcome change. The Time Pool tales are pure nectar. Unfortunately, neither are the main staple of the magazine, and for a hero who can phone himself from Nome to Tierra del Fuego, Baghdad to Hong Kong, the scenery is unnecessarily mundane. The old Atom had little change of locale, it's true. But the old Atom also had five to eight page fillers sandwiched in the midst of other varied goodies. He did not have to fill an entire comic, nor did his personal version of Ivytown.

Paradoxically, the art is excellent and part of the problem simultaniously. It begs for the exotic, the ornate, the colorful to bring gaudity to life. For locales such as in the Time Pool journeys, for uniforms and costumes as in Green Lantern or The Flash. In the Atom all this is doled out with an eye dropper.

Also, while Kane and Greene are to be credited with an interesting assortment of facial types, they can be liberally cursed for having a minimum of expressions. Their work, in fact, reminds me of nothing so much as it does the Shirley Temple flicks. Bright eyed, bushy-tailed, cheery art with occasional gosh-wow goggling for dramatic effect is the Atom's lot. That, like the anemic, plodding dialogue, is not exactly conducive to fireworks.

Doom Patrol, Metamorpho, Sarge Steel, and Marvel's line in general all have dialogue. It is expressive, individual, colorful. Fox's tales, on the otherhand, are all rewrites of the same script in that department--and not a very outstanding one at that. The imagination he lavishes on plot doesn't extend to speech. Or maybe it's the fact that I've read the same thing so much that it spoils the color and flair a trifle. Stan Lee has been accused of repi--tition and a lack of creative ingenuity. Gardner Fox ought to be convicted of it--for the Atom, for the rest, and for the sake of generations of heroes to come.

As for the fascination that seems to attract a mean average of 260,000 readers, I can't really say. "Camp" is defined as a state of being so bad that something's good. That fits ACG's heroes to 20 decimal places but the Atom isn't really that bad--yet. In fact, it might be the best of the Gardner Fox line. Which is a rather interesting commentary on both Gardner Fox and NPP.

SMALL TALK

by Glen Johnson

I want to thank all fans who have written me regarding the issues of TCR I had published. I also want to thank all those who have written saying they would like to see me contribute to TCR. Thanks, Jim. Since giving up TCR, I haven't had the time that I thought I would have. Either TCR didn't take up as much time as I believed, or I'm finding more things to do. Whichever it is, I'll try to be back again if you want. It is up to you. This article will jump around. I'll mention anything that comes to mind and hope in the end that I've said something worthy of your time. Since I was the one who tallied the nominations from the Executive Board members for the 1965 Alley Awards, I'd like to discuss this first.

I noticed a lot of confusion in the nominations and to avoid the same confusion in the nominations for next year's Alley Poll, I think some sort of detailed outline should be sent to each Board member for them to follow. This would list all comics and their numbers, heroes for different categories, plus fanzines and their numbers. Unfortunately, neither Derrill nor myself had the time to do this but I think it would be helpful if someone, or a group of three or four fans living in the same city, would volunteer to list this information and send a completed list to whoever might conduct next year's Alley Awards.

I'll now list what I think were some of the mistakes made on the nomination ballots. The Fantastic Four were nominated for "Best Regularly Published Fantasy Comic", as was the "House Of Secrets" which has two heroes, if you can call Eclipso a hero. It seems to me that many fans had trouble, as I did, and a suggested list could be made to clear up the situation. For "Best Humor", Magicman, Lois Lane, and Jimmy Olsen were among the odd nominees listed. Unless some meant to be funny, none of these fit this division. In "Best Misc. Fiction", everything from Batman, Millie the Model, and Jungle Tales of Tarzan were nominated. Granted, Millie and Jungle Tales of Tarzan belong in this category,but does Batman? Many fans nominated Tarzan as one of the ten best heroes, but if all nominations were in "Best Misc. Fiction" as they should have been instead of scattered all over Tarzan would have made the ballot as he should have.

For "Best Editor", nominations for Marquis M. Morse and Archie Goodwin were entered. While the first might well be an editor, it was stated in the nomination ballot that Warren Publications were to be excluded. My biggest disappointment was not to see Bob Haney nominated in the "Best Writer" division. As you may or may not know, he writes Metamorpho, team-ups in Showcase and Brave And Bold, Teen Titans, and Eclipso. In this division, again Archie Goodwin was nominated. The next division, "Best Pencil Artist", was as bad. Mike Royer was nominated and to my knowledge Mike only inks for Gold Key and has done no pencil work. "Best Inking Artist" had no mistakes that I could see

There was also a large range in the choice of "Comic Displaying Best Color Work" with Sarge Steel, Toka, Thunder Agents, B&B/JSA, Flash Gordon, and Tarzan of the Apes polling a few votes. The same can be said of "Comics Most Needing Improvement". Everything from Forbidden Worlds to Green Arrow (?) was listed. "Best Hero" also had a large range of nominations as did "Best Villian" and "Best Supporting Character". "Best Group" had what I considered to be some unusual entries in East Company, the Aliens from Magnus, and Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. A few Board members were in error when nominating "Best New Strip or Book". Sampson, Jungle Tales of Tarzan and Captain America were nominated but all these debuted before 1965. Another nominated for the same division is Thunderbolt which is dated 1966 and therefore not eligible until next year. There was also as much miscasting of votes in "Best Revived Hero". Captain America was one. Others were Blue Beetle and Robotman, all of whom had their own strips well before this year. Also nominated was the Spectre who appeared in Showcase before the end of '65 but the issue was dated 1966. The last pro division, "Most Desired for Revival", nominees ranged all the way from Spacehawk to David Innes. I think fans should remember that in this category, votes should be kept to sensible thinking and not the nominations of characters with no chance whatsoever.

Because of the speed in which the nomination ballots were mailed to Executive Board members, certain issues of fanzines such as DOWN UNDER #1, JEDDAK #6, TCR #32, and perhaps others I'm unaware of were printed after December 1, 1964 and were therefore out too late for the 1964 awards and were to be considered this year. Fortunately, enough fans voted for Down Under and it and Jeddak made the fanzine list. I was sorry to see that Keltner's cover for TCR #32 was forgotten as a potential candidate for "Best Ditto/Mimeo Cover". Although there were fewer mistakes in the Fan Categories than in the Pro, there were still mistakes. AE #7, the first place fanzine from last year, was again nominated this year, as was "One Man's Family", and these were made by Board members that should have known better.

All in all, there were a number of unforgivable mistakes that could be eliminated if a few fans were to keep a listing and make it available to the person contacting the awards next year. This would list new heroes, revived heroes, all titles of comics published during 1966 (example Metamorpho #4-9), "Best Misc. Fiction" (Tarzan, Fightin' Five, Sarge Steel, etc.), as well as listing all editors and writers including what each writes. The fan division would be even simpler. All faneds would be asked to send all fanzines up for nomination to whoever conducted the awards and these could be listed so that no fanzine published this December would be forgotten in 1966. Any comment or suggestions would be appreciated and seriously considered.

I have a suggestion for those who will be doing the nominating next year. Since I know I'm on the Executive Board and one of my responsibilities is to nominate the best pro and fan categories of the year, I write down any outstanding stories, covers, etc. throughout the year and work mainly from this listing. Also, as soon as the last title of the year comes out, I start nominating certain divisions, especially all those from last year, as they are sure to be in the following year. When my ballot does arrive, my ballot is nearly completed. The final ballot could appear much quicker if all were to do this and if the nomination ballots were mailed a week or so before the final pro title appeared instead of mailing the ballots after the last title appears.

Before I turned TCR over to the very capable hands of Derrill I had received a number of inquiries concerning the Academy, the Alley Poll, and information regarding TCR. Even after almost four months since giving up TCR, I'm still receiving two or three letters a week from interested fans who read the plugs for TCR in The Doom Patrol. I have tried answering their questions and have suggested they order TCR and warch for Academy News in TCR, which I had believed would carry more Academy News. Much to my disappointment, Paul Gambaccini hasn't recently written anything along the lines of happenings about the Academy. I do hope Paul will find the time to do a large Academy News section for the new fans, as well as bring the old fans up to date on all happenings. The information need not be entirely new as he could borrow from FORUM and past articles in TCR since new fans haven't read this. If not Paul, someone should take over in his place and review what the objectives of the Academy are and what has been done in the past. New fans have to be brought up to date regarding the Fanzine Lending Library, The Microfilm Lending Library, WHO'S WHO, which hasn't come out as I type this, and is already outdated.

PET PEEVE. I think everyone has a few pet peeves. My main peeve are fanzines that are put out late or worst yet, never. I realize that a number of things can cause an editor to be late. Not long ago, Andrew Franknoi placed ads in fanzines for his zine, COMIC ZINE. Andrew ran into some sort of trouble and his zine was delayed. Many fans mentioned what he did and it was appreciated. He advertized continually that COMIC ZINE would be out but it was being delayed. This let all those who sent money for his zine that while his zine was late it would be out. This is a far cry from MASQUERADER which is supposed to have been out over a year ago. I don't know what's taking Chuck Moss so long but he should either "chuck" the whole idea and return money and contributions or get on the ball. Another is Danny Cassidy who isn't near as late but is way over due and he has mentioned nothing in fanzines that I've read. Come on, faneds! If your publication is late due to problems beyond your control, do as Andrew Franknoi did and let us know it will be out. If you will recall, I introduced just such a feature in TCR for your use. So use it!!

In photo above from left to right--Bill Spicer, Mike Royer, Rick Durell, Richard Kyle, Chuck McCleary, Glen Johnson, John McGeehan and Eugene Henderson.

FANCLAVE #3. On December 20, 1965, the third Fanclave was held in the home of Rick Durell in Los Angeles. The first Fanclave was held at the home of Russ Manning during the summer of 1964 and the second at Richard Kyle's last May. The latest Fanclave was the largest so far. Attending were Rick Durell, John McGeehan, Eugene Henderson, Bill Spicer, Bob Foster, Chuck McCleary, Richard Kyle, Mike Royer, and myself.

A few of the big events were the original art displayed at Rick's home by Foster and Hogarth. Rick also had a special display of rare comics arranged on the dinning room table.

I had arrived the evening before and at 3 P.M. Richard Kyle came over and we three discussed all phases of comic art. All the others arrived around 7 and later Mike Royer, who is now doing ink work for Gold Key, arrived. Everyone at one time or another looked through certain items Rick had on display but we separated into groups of two or three and quickly broke off into other groups and everyone talked with each other. All in all, it was a great get together and I'm looking forward to the next.

In photo below from left to right-Rob Foster, John McGeehan, Chuck McCleary, and Eugene Henderson.

QUOTES from the READERS

John Ryan
12 Barkley Street
Fairfield, NSW
Australia

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I commend you for your outstanding effort on TCR #45. In this issue, you've reached the first stage of excellence and I can't help but marvel that this transformation has been achieved in only four issues. Although your first issue, TCR #42, was a big step forward, it still left a great deal to be desired, in this more professional manner of reproduction. When I suggested TCR #45 as your target issue to complete a variety of improvements, I can't honestly say that I thought that you would make it. Well, I was wrong...and I'm happy that I was wrong!

One of the major breakthroughs has been the adoption of hand-lettered logos for the various sections and articles. Whether I'm right or wrong, I like to think that BIDGEE was responsible for setting the standard. I hope that, in the coming months, you can build up a reserve of these logos so that we never have to return to those frightening days of typed headings.

Another heartening feature was the gradual improvement in the quality of the artwork that appeared as month followed month. While I may have been outspoken on the merits of previous covers I certainly have no complaints about the efforts of my old friend Howard Keltner. Let this become your standard for cover artwork. Surpass it, if you can, but don't accept anything inferior. Doug Potter has given you able support, in the art field, and I'm sure that he has your gratitude. The more I see of Allan Hutchinson's art the more I'm impressed. His art has that confident touch that only arises out of ability and it is far superior to work of some of our better known fanartists. I'm almost tempted to predict Allan as the Alley Award winner of 1966...but I keep remembering Dubay's wonderful PICTO-ORIGIN in TCR #45. I have always admired Bill's artistic talents but I never thought he was capable of such a magnificent effort. A continuation of this high standard must see Bill's name high in the list of Top Fanartists.

David Kaler's OTDB is, for my money, the "meat" of any issue. News! News!...and more News! Is it any wonder that this is the first section I digest each issue? With Dave's Night Of The Great Pumpkin, I would have prefered a straight report.Doubtless, others will think different. However, I'm sure that all other readers were as disappointed as I was that Dave failed to include the name of the fans in the accompanying photographs.

Jim King's EGO CRUSHER is another feature I enjoy...but there are times when it slips to being more of a summary than a review.

I'm pleased that TCR PRESENTS is no longer with us. This type of "current review" article has no place in TCR....or any other zine as far as I'm concerned. However, I hope the removal of this feature doesn't mean that we will not be seeing anymore writing from you and Glen Johnson??

Slowly, the ditto-style layout is becoming something of the past...and the zine is assuming your character. While there are still areas for improvement in this field you are to be complimented on the general manner in which you've handled the layouts. For my part, I'm more than happy with the way you have arranged the BIDGEE columns.

The small print is a drawback and I don't know how or if you can get over the problem without upsetting many fans. It's a simple case of less news in the same amount of space for the same money...or the same amount of news in more pages for a higher tab. It's not an easy problem to solve...particularly when you already lose money on every issue. I wonder how many fans really appreciate that fact?? Also, how many appreciate that despite this loss you're prepared to dig deeper into your pockets and give them the odd "bonus" in the way of a coloured cover?? I wonder!

Assuming that the presentation level doesn't drop below the standard of TCR #45, I feel that every two issues you produce will be equal to one issue of Alter Ego. This means that you would be producing the equivilant of 6 issues of AE per year...which is a fine performance, no matter which way you look at it! I'm not trying to start an argument as to the relative merits of TCR as opposed to AE as they are entirely different fanzines. I am merely evaluating the standards and efforts involved.

As I told you in the other letter, the Aussie Pro artists were most enthusiastic about TCR...and appreciate what you are trying to do. No doubt, you'll be hearing from Pitt, Dixon,Wheelahan & Co. in due course.

May you continue to lift the standard of TCR...and never hesitate to call on Jan or I for help if you feel you need it. ((You have already done more for TCR than I could really have asked for. As I have already said in TCR #45 I deeply appreciate everything you have done to help and your BIDGEE column is proving to be a smash hit with almost all of my readers. Actually I was a little surprised by the great interest that the Aussie pros have shown in TCR but am delighted that they do enjoy it. I just hope that all of you Down Under continue to enjoy every issue and rest assured that I am always doing my best to improve TCR in every way possible. As you can tell in this issue, Glen Johnson most definitely is still a contributor to TCR and will have more columns and articles whenever possible. The names of the persons in the pictures accompanying David's article were withheld at his request.))

Danny Cassidy
5514 Norde Drive
Jacksonville, Fla.
32210

In reply to Rick Weingroff's letter, let me first say that the only reason I criticize any comic-magazine or comic character is in the hope that the editors, writers, and artists will try to do better. By the way, if Rick actually felt that I don't know what I'm talking about, then why did it take him half a page in TCR to express his sentiments?

As for my so-called generalizations, what about you, Rick? According to Flash #134 (the last issue as of yet to give circulation figures) the circulation of Flash was averaging 270,000 as compared to your claim that it was "more than 300,000 copies a month". Batman registered at 410,000 (February 1963) as compared to your 500,000. Your 800,000 Superman readers are 60,000 short as shown in Superman #159 which registered 740,000 as the circulation. I might further add that these figures all bore out the fact that DC at least then was on a downward trend as all of these titles had enjoyed better circulations during 1961 and 1962. I can't and you can't say actually what the current circulation of the DC comics are at this time but perhaps when the February and March 1966 issues come out we'll all know whether DC is still the leader. If the downward trend DC was going through three years ago is still present then you may be in for a surprise.

Concerning your sympathy towards artists who use blank backgrounds, I have these comments. I don't thoroughly object to blank backgrounds in an occasional panel. The eight you mentioned as having appeared in Batman #166 are not so bad. However the 20 to 40 blank backgrounds which appear as regular as clockwork throughout Infantino's art is nothing less than deplorable. I don't know what you personally refer to as backgroundless panels but my definition of one is a panel having not more than 4 straight lines behind the character whether they are colored in or not. Surely my definition of blank backgrounds is reasonable especially when I'm not even counting those panels having only an unrealistic outline of a city as being backgroundless. I'm sure I could show you many an artist who actually does not resort to these backgroundles panels ever. I won't go into a long search for these fellows but instead why not let's pick up a copy of Tales of the Incredible #1 (paperback) which contains stories originally printed in comic-magazines. The stories by Wood and Orlando primarily have few or no backgroundless panels. Anyone can see this for themselves. Marvel and Gold Key artists usually have no more than 5 to 10, if that many, backgroundless panels to a magazine.

I won't go into a big debate comparing a selected panel from Infantino's work to a single panel of Bob Kane's. This can prove little or nothing. In the first place, Kane is working under a style (the Infantino-Schwartz style) which I personally dislike.

I can't help but feel that Kane is way out of his territory. After twenty-five years of drawing Batman in his original style, it can hardly seem that Kane's new style is suited to him. If you want to compare Kane's old style I can refer you to this reprinted newspaper syndicated stories appearing in the Batman Annuals. Most of my personal correspondents agree that this display of Kane's earlier work is among his best. It is obvious to me that Kanes style as shown here is ten times as good as any of Infantino's work. I doubt if you can show me any of Infantino's work of any period in his career which could possible compare to the masterpieces which Kane is capable of producing. In fact, I challenge you to show me any of Infantino's which could compare to real illustration by masters such as Kirby, Kane, Orlando, Severin, Wood, Ditko, and yes, Murphy Anderson, too.

It is true that these poorly planned action sequences are the writers fault. All I can say on the matter is that it just shows that some pros are still in amateur stages.

Concerning those sad Flash and Batman stories being just my opinion. Well, perhaps so. The general feeling which I have gotten from what I have heard and read in fandom is that even those die-hard Schwartz fans have begun to admit that the New Look isn't to their liking. Here is a professional opinion of Batman by the producer of the new Batman TV series. "We'll lay on top of it a hip technique," says Dosier, admitting that the comic books he has read as research have been horrible. Obviously he was referring to the Schwartz Batman. As for the Flash stories, it's up to you readers to show Weingroff and myself what you think about them.

As for Elongated Man, when it stands on its own merits, I personally consider it six feet underground.

Paul Gambacinni
8 Elizabeth Drive
Westport, Conn.

As you know, my term as Executive Secretary has long, long ended. I have searched for a successor. Several Board members made nominations but no one agreed to accept. No one wants the responsibility.

As for as WHO'S WHO, I haven't had any time to devote to it. Those I have asked to work on it have been reluctant and/or uncooperative. Not a single fan observing the obvious difficulty has volunteered to work on it and nobody has volunteered to help out in any way outside of counting the Alley votes which seems to be a glamor job anyway.

Both Jerry Bails and I concur that unless somebody volunteers to save the Academy and a group of people do not indicate enthusiasm, the entire organization should be disbanded. Ideally, the Academy is a fine idea but realistically, individuals get more done by themselves. (I have found this out in everyday life conflicts which have prohibited my participation in fandom recently and are hastening my retirement from fandom.)

Thus, I am asking everybody to notice these three items and to remember them:

(1) Any fan or member of the Executive Board who wasn't nominated who wishes to serve as a dutiful Executive Secretary, and they know the work that should be attached to it that I am unable to perform, should write me immediately. I will consider their sincerity, contact the Board for recommendations, and hand over the entire organization. If there is no genuine response (and do not feel moved out of pity or a feeling that the Academy should be preserved but you can't do anything about it, for a bad Academy is worse than nome at all) I will ask the Executive Board to take the appropriate disbanding action.

(2) No one should send 1966 dues to anybody. No new memberships should be sent in. Old ones will be honored until present problems are figured out.

(3) Those willing to work on the WHO'S WHO should contact me immediately. It will be released as soon as possible. NO mail fraud or distortion charges,please; none of such has been intended. All complaints of delays, however, will be ignored since this is sufficient notice of intention.

My growing-to-total indifference towards fandom as a whole does not effect my concern to fulfill my obligation to once and for all pass on the Academy to somebody else and to bring out the WHO'S WHO (that is, see it brought out).

My thanks to Derrill and Glen for their efforts on behalf of the Board concerning the Alleys. ((I was extremely sorry to hear that no one is willing to take over Paul's position. My decision to handle the Alley Poll wasn't for the glamor of it but from a sincere desire to do all that I can to aid the Academy. I am sure that Glen feels the same way. I would be glad to take over the position of Secretary myself it it wasn't for the simple fact that I can't do both that and publish TCR. So all I can hope is that one of my readers will come forward and take this vital position. How about it?))

John Wright
Box 1277
Port Elisabeth
South Africa

Many thanks for the most enjoyable editions of TCR. It has been quite some time since I have been privileged enough to wade through the pages of Jerry's fine creation and swell to see how it's grown and is being guided by capable hands. Congrats!

John Ryan's column was a sweet bit of reading and no one will deny that the many illustrations added exactly what was needed to make it perfect. I, for one, hope that John will be able to find time to keep the column appearing at reasonably regular intervals, for I am quite positive that there are many more like me who agree that the Digger is one of the best writers in Fandom and more important, when you read Ryan you get to know the guy. Sure, he had a lot of bright new information to throw at your readers but you as an editor will have seen enough articles by now to know that the presentation of facts in an entertaining manner is not something one can knock together lefthanded while picking his teeth.

I'm not qualified to comment on Stan Pitt but the little I do know confirms everything John has said. He's a great guy as well as a wonderful craftsman. Meeting him, I'm sure, would be the kind of pleasure any of us would long remember. And let's face it, Stan makes a lot of US artists look sick.

Welcome back FOX! And thanks to Ronn. I lost a lot of sleep wondering just what had happened after the last episode in D:C.

Gary Povlin
3914 Louisiana Street
Gary, Indiana
46409

On The Drawing Board has been greatly improved by the presende of a large number of news tips. However, I hope that Dave will limit the amount of personal remarks in the future. These remarks make the news tips sound like paid advertisements.

As you know already from previous praise, I am a fan of John Ryan and am glad to see that he will have a regular column in TCR. It was set up very well and I am certainly looking forward to future installments. I certainly hope the Pitt brothers will agree to contribute more of their art which I enjoyed very much. They have a wonderful style. The Lemmy Caution strip vaguely reminded me of John Prentice's Rip Kirby style of panel construction. The title logo is excellent. Any chance of getting Reg Pitt to do logos for other columns in TCR?

Charles Calabrese
139 Gumps Lane
Wintersville, Ohio
43952

TCR #45 can be accurately described with only one word--magnificient. Although Howard Keltner's cover was not to his usual par, this was compensated for by the glorious color. Your new logo is much better than the hastily done ones of the past and I hope to be able to say the same for that of your letter in the future.

"On the Drawing Board" surpassed its own record for quantity and quality of news items. After viewing Doug Potter's illo with my magnifying glass I couldn't stop laughing for five minutes. It was even better than Alan Hutchinson's Superman vs. Captain Marvel gag strip page which appeared in TCR #44.

John Ryan's BIDGEE was even better than the previous one, if that is possible. The inclusion of unpublished strips will become the trademark of the column along with the already well appreciated professional writing style.

As for Foss' FOX I found it to be truly professional. However, I can't see why you need to use two pages per installment. A bit of panel rearrangement and size reduction and each month's strip could fit on one page, ala Voice of Comicdom.

Jeff Sosnaud
148 Sixth Avenue
San Francisco, Calif.
94118

Re: TCR #44. First off, the appearance of the issue as a whole was very good and gave the reader the impression that he is reading a quality zine--which he is. I always look forward to the editorial by Derrill because I'm always sure to find something there that will interest me. This is something that I'm glad TCR has and I wish more zines would have. A department like this where an editor and his readers get together for a little informal chit-chat is a very good idea. If I had it my way I would enlarge this department and have Derrill talk about a wider range of topics. ((Gladly if you will tell me just where I am supposed to find the extra time--ed))

I enjoyed On The Drawing Board as usual. Not much news from DC this time around but I guess this is because of their column Direct Current. I like the idea of this column in DC mags but I hope DC will not be eliminated from your column in the future because of it. In the future could you please tell us the issue number or the month for which it is dated or else things will become a bit confusing. Except for a few of the items mentioned in last issue's Board, there were hardly any ish numbers or dates for us confused fans. It becomes mighty frustrating to read about a new issue coming out and not know which one your talking about.

I imensely enjoyed Bill Dubay's reproduction of the origin of Blue Bolt. Bill's ever improving art is a pleasure to see. But in rendering his version I only wish that he could have given us a demonstration of Blue Bolt's powers as I'm still in the dark about this.

Concerning Robert Schoenfeld's letter about the Alley Polls. I go along with him in his statement that the voter should vote for the greatest contribution in said nominee's field. This would be a fine idea in theory but hardly so practically speaking. First of all, the average fan probably does not read all of the comics which all of the nominee's work appears in. Secondly, the average

fan will most likely hurriedly scribble down his choices making his selections not on who really deserves the award but on personal choice. When this is done, we do not have the results of who the greatest contributers were for that year but, rather, who the majority of fandom likes as their own personal favorites. Until this matter is rectified we really have no right to present a pro with any symbol of him being the best in his field. My only suggestion to improve this matter would be for fans to dwell on who they put down for choices and to try to get at least two samples of each nominee's work so that he may base his choices wisely.

Steve Johnson
1018 North 31st Street
Corvallis, Oregon
97330

TCR #45 came in the mail today and I can truthfully say that it was sheer pleasure to read it. Keltner's cover was quite good and the color work was excellent. Color offset isn't too rare for zines but to see an artist who can utilize color well is a real pleasure.

I can't agree with you more on the subject of Spiderman. Romita may be good but he's too standard (I call him that for lack of a better word) whereas Ditko was delightfully different. The "abnormalities" in anatomy helped to create a whole new world for the Web-Spinner and his supporting characters to exist in, not merely an imitation of reality. Also, I doubt if Romita will be able to capture the ACTION that made Spidey come alive. I think we should be thankful, though, that Romita is on hand to take over. None of the other current Marvel staff could do anything near satisfactory on Spiderman.

Ryan's BIDGEE was delightful. All the illustrations were justified (especially the one by Eisner) and the details on the other "fandom" were equally welcome. By the way, a fan publisher has reached the mark of 100 issues. Norb Reinsel who started Norbs Notes in 1960 will reach 100 with the May 1966 issue and then discontinue the zine.

As usual John McGeehan's fanzine listing was worth looking over and especially for the newer fans it will be a big help in choosing zines. Looking through it, though, one sees a problem that seems to pervade a good percentage of amatuer magazines--lack of regularity in publishing. Unless a zine consists of all articles on old comics that can't become outdated, publishing schedules of less frequency than bi-monthly render the zines obsolete.

Rick Weingroff
University of Maryland
Calvert E 201
College Park, Maryland

Of course Captain Marvel has indeed returned. But before a discussion of this new version by M.F. Enterprises, I must give vent to a few of the emotions which are no doubt uppermost in the minds of all right thinking fans.

First, I, like everyone else in fandom, always took for granted the old maxim--Captain Marvel can't be revived. As a result, I never picked Captain Marvel in an Alley Poll as "The Hero Most Deserving of Revival". Moreover, I tended to be somewhat nostalgic about the Cap. He was one of the best of the "Golden Age" and characters of his calibre don't flaso off the four-color presses everyday.

Obviously, Captain Marvel has been revived. Well, perhaps we should qualify the statement. The name "Captain Marvel" has been revived. Just as Stan Lee was able to revive Daredevil's name without any legal entanglements, apparently M. F. Enterprises is able to do the same Exactly what legal difficulties will result from publication by a third company of a hero that two companies agreed should never be published again can't be foretold.((See the news column for more info on this point--ed.))

Secondly, I, perhaps like everyone else in fandom, must express moral indignation at this debauchery of the old strip. Captain Marvel was an all-time great. The new Captain Marvel hardly seems fit to stand in the former's boots. So let me put in the token "Captain Marvel was better off dead" comment that will nodoubt reverberate through fandom in the course of the next few months--just as it has reverberated through fandom at various times in the past--at the recreation of Black Hood, Shield, and Hangman.

Thirdly, I must admit that my critical faculties leave much to be desired in evaluating this character. After all, in the front of my mind is the image of Billy Batson. I can still see Billy shout Shazam as through some trickery he finally manages to get the gag off his mouth. I can still see Captain Marvel defeating Dr. Sivana, Mister Mind, and all sorts of other horrors onlyto quake at the approach of a mere girl. I can still see the mystical black cloud with "BOOM" written in it. What, when all is said and done, can live up to the standards of ephemeral nostalgia?

Forthly, I must again express moral indignation at the revival of Plastic Man--as a villain it would seem. " Plastic Man was better off dead." I don't know exactly how DC will take this second flagrant flaunting of copyright laws--for National owns the Plastic Man character. And needless to say, Plastic Man II hardly lives up to my memory of Plastic Man I; nor to my hope that one day DC would change the Elongated Man's outlandis name to "Plastic Man".

Fifthly, the new Captain Marvel has various positive values. It has a long-honored name, powers roughly equivalent to Captain marvel I's plus various new powers making him more of an imitation of Superman than the first version; and a peculiar new power. Cap II also has his "magic words". He even has a "billy" (though whether his youthful companion is a "Billy Batson" or not was not established in the first issue). Moreover, Captain Marvel II has behind it Carl Burgos, the man behind the Human Torch. One would think that the creative genius behind the Human Torch could surely do wonders with a new super-hero.

Sixthly, it is difficult to believe that Burgos/ Elwood/Francho are reviving the Captain Marvel tradition for purely artistic purposes. That is, a certain amount of commercialism must be expected in the comic book industry, which is, after all the fan letters are read and burned, just a business. But there is a point where commercialism ends and imitation and "shlock house" tactic begins. From all evidence, Captain Marvel II SEEMS to belong to the "shlock house" category. Burgos, regardless of his creative genius in the forties, has been reduced of late to imitating the success of other people. His Weird is a blatant combination/imitation not only of Creepy but also of everything against which Wertham railed in Seduction of the Innocent. The use of the two names "Captain Marvel" and "Plastic Man" can only be interpreted as an attempt to capitalise on the populatity of the names.

Seventh, there is a possibility that item six was not entirely correct. After all, perhaps Burgos and Elwood have forsaken an almighty buck for the less might but more aesthetically pleasing art.

Eighth, as for the artwork, it can only be said that it is probably as good as the artwork on the first issues of Captain Marvel in the forties, comparatively speaking. Considering that the average reader can not differentiate one art style from another, regardless of the mediocrity or greatness involved, this art by Francho will no doubt suffice.

Ninth, Elwood's scripts are interesting, largely because they try so hard. I had the impression that there were many loose ends in these stories. Also, the script possessed various defects that must be ironed out (repetition, stilted dialogue, etc).

Tenth, before any fair evaluation of the character can be made, Captain Marvel must be given a chance to develop. Will he have much of a personal live? A secret identity? Will the scripts improve? Will Otto Binder be asked to write the strip? Will the artwork improve? Will the character continue to exist or will DC have something to say about it?

Only time will reveal the answer to these questions. I, personally, am behind this book 100%. Perhaps Captain Marvel WAS better off dead. But on the other hand, he IS back, if only in name, and if we must have him, I'd rather back him than knock him, hoping that he can eventually become the great character that he once was.

Still, I must admit that my antecedents would be a great deal clearer were it not for Captain Marvel II.

6 x 6

WINNERS IN THE GREAT DATA CONTEST

Special note: The first six winning entries had an official count of 370, 233, 100, 88, 66, and 63 respectively. Please recall that only the first correct card for a given issue to reach me was a part of the official count. All 10 second place winners will receive a bonus of original art--from one to six pages from leading strips, depending upon the number of Data Cards in the final count at the deadline. All entries received after the deadline of Dec. 31, 1965, as well as all new data submitted in 1966 will be counted toward the next contest which I will announce later this year. Please submit all data on 3 x 5 index cards unless you are filling in one of the special data forms that I have provided. Contact me for a listing of the data that I still need--Jerry Bails.

First Place: Rick Durell, 412 West Palm Avenue, El Segundo, California 90245. Ten pages of original art from top hero strips including the Golden Age art of the incomparable Simon and Kirby.

Bonus for the largest number of correct entries in December: Rick Durell. Near mint copy of ALL STAR #12.

Ten Second Place Winners: (Photo-tale plus original art)

Kevin Johnson
Raymond Miller
Gregory Jein
Henry Steele
Ira Ewen
Charles Smith
George Pacinda
Andrew Frankoi
Larry Herndon
Jim Halperin

Twenty-five Third Place Winners: (one page of original art)

Ken Mitchell	Eugene Henderson	LeRoy Blair
Robert Barritt	Lee Whittlesey	Dennis Richard
Barry Brooks	Gary Lowenthal	Bob Churchill
Al Kohfeld	George Hagenauer	Rick Weingroff
Richard Kyle	Robert Jennings	Larry Gibson Jr.
John Stanley	Edmund Dmowski	M. R. Gemignani
Mike Maxim	Glen Johnson	Dan Murphy
Richard O'Brien	Andrew Yanchus	Donald Ensign
		Larry Tuel

MAR-BREN SOUND CO.   420 PELHAM ROAD   ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14610

"Specialists in pre-recorded tapes and sound effects"

Mar-Bren Sound Co. can now make available to fandom tapes of radio's "Golden Age". Below is a partial listing of radio titles available. Our latest sales list can be had for an s.a.e.
TERMS: All programs 30 minutes long unless otherwise denoted. Cost of shows includes price of tape, postage, insurance, and handling. Two shows/600 foot reel/$3.50; 4 shows/1200 foot reel/$5.75. Because of much trading recently accomplished, the quality of the shows vary considerably depending on the original source. Shows marked with an asterisk have some static but the program is complete.

THE LONE RANGER

El Diablo, The Wilson Brothers, Gunsmoke, The Flood, The Gold Bell and Colonel Without a Regiment

THE GREEN HORNET

The Unexpected Meeting, There Was a Crooked Man, Charity Takes It on the Chin, The Last of Oliver Perry, The Letter, Bait for a Two-Timer*, Trouble Hits the Trolley*, The Gas Pen*, The Classified Ad*, Youth Takes the Headlines*

THE SHADOW

Death on the Rails, The Voice of Death, SpiderBoy, Terror at Wolfhead Knoll, The Comic Strip Killer, Nursery Rhyme Murders

JOHNNY DOLLAR: The Shadow of a Doubt Matter
PERIL: The Curse of Ranzee

INTRODUCING...SUPER SPY, the new fanzine for spy and secret agent buffs! In the first issue read such articles as:

---The Phenomenal Success of GET SMART by John Wooley
---A comparison of James Bond and Nick Carter in "007 vs. N3" by Dave Bibby
---Bart Gould by Jeff Gebb; The Man from M.A.N. by Steve Fears; a Paul Rybarsyk cover; and more articles!

Order it for 20¢ from: Larry Walczak, 3102 Plum Street, Erie, Pa.

Please send 25¢ for postage and handling for any orders under $2. If you have a list of comics you are willing to sell, send it with your order or by itself.

FOR SALE

All comics in good or better condition unless otherwise noted. c=coverless, b=backless, all prices @.

ACTION #291(fair), 303--30¢; 307, 308, 314-316--25¢
ADVENTURE #300--40¢; 305, 307, 308, 310--35¢; 311, 312-317--30¢; 318, 324, 325, 331, 333-339--25¢
OUR ARMY AT WAR #140, 142--20¢
ATOM #18--20¢
BATMAN #145(fair), 147, 148(fair), 150--40¢; 150c--25¢; 155-158--45¢; 160, 165, 168, 170-175, 177--25¢
BATMAN ANNUAL #2c(poor)--25¢
FIGHTING FORCES #82--20¢
HAWKMAN #3--30¢
JIMMY OLSEN #48c, 72c, 73, 74--25¢
METAL MEN #3--30¢
MYSTERY IN SPACE #82c, 84, 85--35¢; 87-90--30¢
STRANGE ADVENTURES #159, 160--30¢
SUPERBOY #103c, 109--25¢
SUPERMAN #159, 167, 168--35¢
SUPERMAN ANNUALS #3c(poor)--30¢; 4b--55¢
WORLDS FINEST #135--25¢

KEN REITER   1551 ANNANDALE   UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI 63130

WANTED!!

I need the following comics to complete certain gaps in my collection: WHITE INDIAN #14 (Frazetta art); DURANGO KID #1, 2, 4, 8, 11-16; GHOST RIDER #2, 3, 4, 5; TIM HOLT #17, 21, 23; and THRILLING #68, 70, 72, 74. Note: I will pay $10.00 for WHITE INDIANA 14 if in <u>mint</u> condition. Also I would like to correspond with other fans and collectors of Frank Frazetta!

ROBERT BARRETT   254 NORTH ESTELLE   WICHITA, KANSAS 67214

WORLDFARE PUBLICATIONS

FANZINE INDEX

BOB PAVLAT and BILL EVANS, Editors

Listing most fanzines
From the beginning through 1952
Including titles, editors' names and data on each issue
More than 140 pages entirely re-typed
Looseleaf, indexed, stiff-covers

A FORE-RUNNER OF THE
"BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FANZINES"
NOW BEING COMPILED

$2.50 postpaid anywhere

OBTAINABLE FROM:-
Collectors Book Store
1717 North Wilcox
Hollywood, California 90028
Michael Ashley
8 Shurland Avenue
Sittingbourne, Kent, England
Carl J. Brandon, Jr.
Sällskapsvägen 7
Stockholm 48, Sweden
Dieter Steinseifer
8200 Rosenheim
Dr. Geiger-Str. 1, Germany
And from the publisher

Re-printed and Published by

HAROLD PALMER PISER
41-08 Parsons Boulevard, Flushing, New York 11355
U.S.A.

EARTHMAN, Hero of the Ages, appears in Adventure Heroes Hide-A-WAY #8. See him in his constant struggle in aiding aliens throughout the Universe, yet knowing he can never again see the planet from which he came.

The cover of #8 will be a photo-offset cover by the one and only Jack Kirby. This ditto-offset fanletter will feature art by Bob Feie, Gary Povlin, Bruce Lowery, Mike Havery, Jerry Buccafusco among others. Articles are by Derrill Rothermich, Wally Sesny, Ed Bennet, Ed Beardsley, and Jim Bomback.

Adventure Heroes Hide-A-Way is the main function of Adventure Heroes Club. The Hide-A-Way is published bi-monthly at the price of 25¢ per issue. Both Jack Kirby and Ogden Whitney are honorary members and contributors with more pros to come!

Contests occasionally appear in the zine and all members are obligated to contribute to it. Newcomers to comicdom are welcome as well as oldtimers. Want lists and comics for sale make up the advertisement section to help fans get the comics they need for collections. No worry about straining your eyes trying to read reduced printing. As you read through the colorful pages, you can be guaranteed that the wonders of comicdom will come in true AH style. For more information write to:

JOHN BUCCAFUSCO 136 PROSPECT STREET JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

THE COMIC READER #46
BOX 801
ROLLA, MISSOURI
65401

FIRST CLASS MAIL
RETURN REQUESTED